

S o u t h e a s t I d a h o Medical Reserve Corps

December 2009

H1N1 Response in Southeastern Idaho

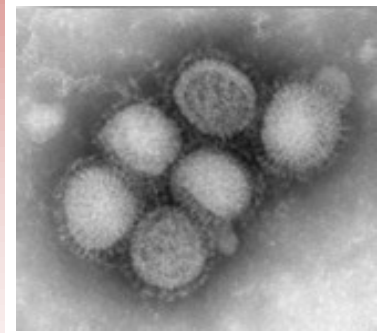
The emergence of the 2009 H1N1 novel influenza virus in April 2009 set in motion a series of events that has kept public health extremely busy in the subsequent months. In June, the World Health Organization (WHO) raised the pandemic alert to the highest level, phase 6, after confirming with virus experts and member countries that the novel H1N1 virus was spreading from person to person and causing mild to severe illness, at that time, in 74 countries. As of November 22nd, the WHO reported 207 countries have reported confirmed cases with 7,820 deaths.

Knowing a pandemic was long overdue, the Southeastern District Health Department (SDHD) has been preparing for this type of event for the past several years. Health Preparedness Program staff held a pandemic influenza exercise in July 2008 to prepare for such an event. Countless community partners, including MRC volunteers, have worked together to educate the public on how to prevent H1N1 disease transmission and developed plans to operate Point of Dispensing (POD) mass vaccination clinics.

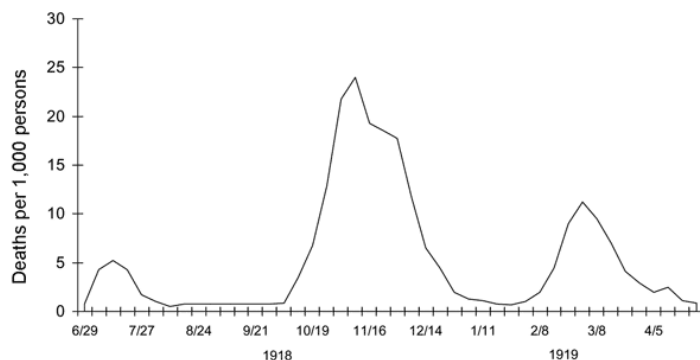
H1N1 mass vaccination clinics started in the middle of October and by the end of November, over 20 clinics were held in southeastern Idaho. Over 23,000 individuals have been vaccinated. Because of vaccine limitations, only people within certain priority groups were eligible to receive the vaccine: pregnant women, caregivers of infants less than six months of age, children six months to 24 years of age, and people with chronic health conditions aged 25 to 64. Children under 10 must receive two doses in order to have immunity to H1N1. In the near future, the priority groups may be set aside, and everyone can become vaccinated.

Pandemics in the past have had a tendency to occur in "waves" where the illness will peak and subside, only to return once again. From 1918-1919, there were three waves of disease as it made its way around the globe (see photo below), albeit in a much more severe form of disease than being presently seen. While it appears influenza cases reached a peak in October in the United States, public health urges people not to become complacent because another wave may arrive in the late winter or early spring months. Wash your hands frequently, avoid touching your face, and cover your cough.

In the coming weeks, private healthcare providers and pharmacies will be receiving H1N1 vaccine to vaccinate the public. Information on where vaccine will be available will be posted on the SDHD website at www.sdhdidaho.org.



Novel 2009 H1N1 Influenza



Depiction of waves in 1918-1919 courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov

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Thank You to MRC Volunteers!

Many MRC volunteers came forward and assisted the Southeastern District Health Department in H1N1 response efforts. Volunteers assisted SDHD staff answering questions from the public on the H1N1 hotline and at H1N1 clinics throughout southeastern Idaho.

The Southeast Idaho MRC received recognition from the national MRC Office of the Surgeon General in an email that was sent to all MRCs nationwide to highlight units utilizing volunteers in H1N1 response. Southeast Idaho MRC volunteers have donated almost 300 hours of service! That is amazing and we are so grateful to each of you.

The following volunteers dedicated their time and service answering calls on our H1N1 Hotline:

Debra Larsen	Kemper Marple	Susan Marple
Rosie Harris	Debra Orcutt	Lynda Homer
Shelley Hardin	Gene Wiggers	Lynn Birdsong
Grace Jacobson	Maureen Hawkins	Terri Scott
Heather Shephard	Michelle Lorentzson	Wendy Muir
Jane Spall	Rae Ann Stephenson	Rosemary Nett
Judy Trost		



The following volunteers assisted at H1N1 Mass Vaccination Clinics:

Barbara Chambers	Dave Martin	Kathryn Myer	Becky Phelps
Debra Orcutt	Linette Chavis	Belma Colter	Denise Hoffa
Liz Dietz	Brad Capson	Erika Gunter	Lynda Homer
Brooke Benedetti	Janet Hughes	Lynn Birdsong	Cheryl Anderson
Jennifer Parker	Maureen Hawkins	Cheryl Simpson	Joni Bennett
Rosie Harris	Judy Trost	Chris McCoy	Wendy Muir

**To stay up-to-date on H1N1,
visit www.sdhdidaho.org**



MRC Leader News

Some volunteers recently at SDHD to help with the H1N1 hotline already know the news, but for those of you that have not seen Michelle Butterfield, MRC Volunteer Coordinator and Trainer, we want to announce that she and her husband Ryon are expecting their first child! It's a boy and everyone affectionately refers to him as "Baby Butter." Everyone at SDHD is very excited for them and anxiously awaiting his January 4th due date.

Denise O'Farrell, MRC Chairwoman was asked by the MRC Regional Coordinator, Jesus Reyna, to be a member of the MRC Capacity Building Workgroup. The overall goal of the Capacity Building Workgroup is to provide input on the strategic direction and capacity-building needs of the MRC program to the National Program Office. Denise is very excited for the opportunity and looks forward to meeting other MRC directors in this endeavor.

On another note, realizing this fall was going to be very busy with H1N1 response, Denise successfully defended her thesis in September and completed all the requirements to get her master's degree in public health!

Happy Holidays!

Holiday Health & Safety Tips

This holiday season, take some steps to stay healthy and safe.

- Wash your hands often
- Manage your stress
- Prevent injuries
- Wear your seat belt
- Get vaccinated
- Eat healthy, and be active
- Get regular check-ups
- Travel safely
- Handle and prepare food safely
- Practice fire safety

For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov.

Holiday Recipe for Chicken & Sweet Potato Stew

Ingredients

- 6 bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed, trimmed of fat
- 2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into spears
- 1/2 pound white button mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 6 large shallots, peeled and halved
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary, or 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons white-wine vinegar



Delicious & Healthy Stew

Preparation

Place chicken, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, shallots, garlic, wine, rosemary, salt, and pepper in a 6-quart slow cooker; stir to combine. Put the lid on and cook on low until the potatoes are tender, about 5 hours. Before serving, remove bones from chicken, if desired, and stir in vinegar. Enjoy!

Volunteer Idaho Registry

We are happy to announce we currently have 116 volunteers registered on the Volunteer Idaho system. Thank you to those of you who have taken the time to register on the site. If you have not registered on the site, please go to www.volunteeridaho.org to register. If you have questions, please contact Michelle at 239-5207.

National Preparedness Month Activities

MRC Workshop Photos



September 11, 2009 at MRC Workshop. Darin Letzring (photo on left), SDHD All-Hazards Planner, discusses Point of Dispensing (POD) operational concepts for the H1N1 mass vaccination clinics with MRC volunteers. In the photo on the right, Michelle Butterfield gives volunteer Pete Nash an MRC tote bag as thanks for his work as a volunteer.

Preparedness Fair



Pete and Donna Nash's potable water truck.



Chubbuck Fire Department's Incident Response vehicles.



The Pocatello Police Department's command vehicle.



Mass casualty incident tent.

Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer. ~Author Unknown